

January 2021

Protocol for an eHub as an Systemic Intervention for Homeless Shelter Staff and Resident Psychosocial and Behavioral Needs


Celeste Sangiorgio
Rochester Institute of Technology

Cory Crane
Rochester Institute of Technology

Cassandra Berbery
Rochester Institute of Technology

Caroline Easton
Rochester Institute of Technology

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.rit.edu/frameless>

 Part of the [Digital Humanities Commons](#), [Engineering Commons](#), [Graphics and Human Computer Interfaces Commons](#), [Psychiatric and Mental Health Commons](#), [Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy Commons](#), and the [Telemedicine Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Sangiorgio, Celeste; Crane, Cory; Berbery, Cassandra; and Easton, Caroline (2021) "Protocol for an eHub as an Systemic Intervention for Homeless Shelter Staff and Resident Psychosocial and Behavioral Needs," *Frameless*: Vol. 4: Iss. 1, Article 34.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.rit.edu/frameless/vol4/iss1/34>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Frameless* by an authorized editor of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.

Protocol for an eHub as an Systemic Intervention for Homeless Shelter Staff and Resident Psychosocial and Behavioral Needs

Celeste Sangiorgio*

Rochester Institute of Technology

Cory Crane

Rochester Institute of Technology

Cassandra Berbery

Rochester Institute of Technology

Caroline Easton

Rochester Institute of Technology

This paper includes a proposal and outline for a one-stop, web-based eHub for homeless shelter workers and residents. The shelter eHub is proposed as a one-stop portal for staff and resident skills acquisition, shelter and community resources, and rehearsal of coping skills. The theoretical and empirical support for eHub contents is reviewed, as well as the structure for evidence-based psychological skills building and gamified and virtual skills rehearsal components.

I. SELF-SELECTION INTO USE OF TRAINING, DIRECTORY, RESOURCES, OR COPING COMPONENTS

Individuals in homeless shelters have complex needs, ranging from low access to resources to long-term mental or physical illnesses



Fig. 1. Mock-up of shelter eHub website and options

(Holzhauer et al. 2019; (Kuhn and Culhane 1998). Likewise, shelter staff experience trauma and burnout from exposure to first-responder work (e.g., witnessing or learning of trauma; Smith 2019; Waegemakers Schiff and Lane 2019).

The present paper proposes a flexible, interactive eHub that allows shelter staff and residents to self-select the tools they need. Shelter

*Corresponding Author, Celeste Sangiorgio

Submitted April 13th, 2022

Accepted April 13th, 2022

Published online April 18th, 2022



Fig. 2. Avatar used for skills training and rehearsal

staff who require assistance coordinating to meet residents needs can use “community resources” or “internal directory;” likewise, shelter residents can use the “resources” or the “directory” to prepare for meetings with staff.

The eHub includes an interactive training and rehearsal component in “training” and “coping” that allows individuals to learn and rehearse therapeutic skills using gamified, text-based, and virtual simulation components. Shelter residents will be directed to adaptive skills they can use to replace harmful behaviors and distress (e.g., relaxation skills; replacement behaviors for substance use or aggression); shelter staff will also have access to these training tools, as well as de-escalation training using a simulation of potential crisis scenarios that may occur at the shelter (e.g., aggressive, drunk, or psychotic residents). The “coping” skills tabs allows quick-access to guided use of coping skills taught in the “training” section.

II. CONCLUSION

This protocol uses a multidisciplinary, consultation approach to develop a viable digital skills training tool for shelter staff and residents to decrease risk of re-entry and maintenance of psychiatric symptoms among

staff and residents. This protocol is the first of its kind to use and assess digital tools related to staff psychosocial functioning and shelter performance.

Keywords— *digital healthcare, eHealth, homeless adults, marginalized communities, mental health, psychotherapy, training tools*

III. REFERENCES

Holzhauser, Cathryn Glanton, Thomas Byrne, Molly M. Simmons, David Smelson, and Elizabeth E. Epstein. 2019. "Profiles of Clinical Need Among Homeless Individuals with Dual Diagnoses." *Community Mental Health Journal* 55 (8): 1305–12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-019-00432-6>.

Kuhn, Randall, and Dennis P. Culhane. 1998. "Applying Cluster Analysis to Test a Typology of Homelessness by Pattern of Shelter Utilization: Results from the Analysis of Administrative Data." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 26 (2): 207–32. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022176402357>.

Smith, Heather. 2019. "Compassion Fatigue, Coping, and Turnover among Homeless Service Providers." ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. Psy.D., Ann Arbor: Spalding University. 2316003637. ProQuest